

## South End Grand Opening – Ps 78:7

It's good to be back, and even better to celebrate the Grand Opening of our South End build-out! Praise the Lord! There were days I wasn't sure we'd get here. Especially since this was the vision when we first bought the building back in 2006. But after years of planning, and patience, and sacrifice – by God's grace we did it.

And the goal of it all, is *that* [the next generation] *should set their hope in God*. Straight from **Ps 78**. Take a look.

[5] *He* [God] *established a testimony in Jacob* [another name for Israel; he established a record of his ways] *and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children*, [6] *that the next generation might know them* [the ways and requirements of God], *the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children*, [7] *so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.* (ESV)

That's been the theme verse for our build-out. That our kids and grandkids and their kids, would love the Lord like we do. Follow him like we do. And it's finally done.

So we're going to abbreviate our service, and give you a chance to see it. To walk through it right *after* the service. And you don't want to miss it.

But first, I want to tell you . . .

### • How we got here

We started our church on November 14, 2004 in the auditorium of Bettendorf High School. A miracle in and of itself. After moving here in August of that year, we formed a core group by word of mouth, met for a few months (**Photo**), and then opened the door to 463 people our first service.

7 months later, in June of 2005, we went to 2 services and started looking for (**Photo**) property. And it wasn't long before this building popped up.

So in March of 2006, with 625 people coming, we raised \$1.6M in 6 weeks (**Photo**), and signed on the dotted line. A year later, after our *first* build-out (**Photo**), we moved in and marveled at God's goodness.

6 years after that, as God *continued* to work (**Photo**), we raised \$4M and added the *north* end of our building. A gym, classrooms, offices, and greenroom.

➤ Then, in the Fall of 2019, a little over a year ago, we decided to renovate the *South* End, and start the capital campaign the following spring. Spring of 2020. Until something called a "Coronavirus" started spreading.

And before long a pandemic ensued, the stock market tanked, and the world shutdown. (**Photo**) No weekend services, no in-person ministry, and certainly no financial security. And we agonized. But having been led by the Spirit to *start* the process, we decided to move ahead. Launching a \$3.9M capital campaign in the *middle* of it all. Crazy.

And even crazier, is that you responded. (**Graphic**) Giving and pledging over \$2M so far, in addition to the million we had saved, in the midst of your *own* uncertainty. \$2M on top of your *regular* tithes and offerings of \$3.6M this year. Only \$70k shy of our budget.

Talk about faith. And commitment. And love for the work of ministry.

➤ God bless you for that. God bless you for your generosity and sacrifice. God bless you for laying up treasure in heaven. God bless you for catching the vision and embracing it. For looking beyond your *own* interests to the interests of others; the *next* generation.

I hope your joy is full. And I hope it continues to overflow for *years* to come. That's how we got here.

Next, is *why*.

### • Why we did it

The short answer, is the kids. (**Graphic**) 63% of all believers, all those who trust Jesus to save them from the consequences of their sin and follow him as Lord – 63% make that decision between the ages of 4-14. And 34% between 15-29. Time is short.

What's more (**Graphic**), 2/3 of all church-going teenagers will stop attending as a young adult. And 69% of *them* likely won't return. We need to do everything we can to *prevent* that. If we don't reach our kids early and often, effectively and fully, we risk losing them forever. That's why we did this. (**Graphic**)

➤ There was a need for better space. There was a responsibility to provide the best we can. And there's an opportunity to impact the next generation.

And we've satisfied the first two. We now have some of the best children's and student space I know of. We've provided the best we can.

But the opportunity to *use* what we've built, and actually *impact* the next generation with it, starts now.\*\*\*\*\*

➤ And that requires us. Men and women who not only invest their money, but their time and effort. People who love the Lord and serve the Lord, by loving and serving our littles. People who *see* the opportunity, and *seize* the opportunity.

Will you consider that? We need your help. And you can respond by filling out a **volunteer card**. We'll give you one as you tour the South End in a few minutes. Just fill it out, drop it in the basket at the new check-in desk, and someone will be in touch.

Next is the what.

### • What we did

In short, we renovated 26k sq. ft. (**Blueprint**) About 30% of our total. We gutted it and re-configured the entire area. And finished the **kitchen** on the *north* end as well.

So that we now have 11 *classrooms*. (**Graphic**) An expanded *nursery*. A *play area* that's like a siren song. An expanded entrance and *check-in area*. 2 large meeting rooms. And a *multi-purpose room* right in the middle. For everything from children's and student ministries, to weddings and funerals.

➤ And we've *named* the large rooms to emphasize their purpose. The smallest one, on the *southwest* corner of the building, is called **Compass** (132). Because it's going to be used

primarily by our pre-K kids, who are learning how to find their *direction* in life. With the goal of pointing them to Jesus.

The medium sized room, down the hall a bit, is called **Cornerstone** (233). Because it's going to be used by kids and students who are setting and solidifying the *foundation* of their lives; on the *chief* cornerstone; Jesus.

And the multi-purpose room is called **Legacy** (261). Because it's going to be used by everyone; children, students, *and* adults. All of whom are either *leaving* a legacy, or *receiving* a legacy. A legacy of faith. From one generation to the next.

That's *what* we did, and I can't wait for you to see it.

But there's one more thing I want you to know.

- **Who did it**

Time doesn't allow me to recognize *everyone* who played a part in this, but I do want to draw your attention to a few.

➤ The first is **Bush Construction**. And I want to introduce AJ Loss, their president. (AJ on stage). I've heard nothing but *good* about you guys. From quality work to quality people. And I just want to thank you personally.

➤ I also want to thank your lead foreman on the project; Ken Jorgensen. (Ken stand) Ken, from what I heard, you were all things to all people on this build-out. And you did an amazing job. Juggling everything from design features and blueprints, to people and problems. Thank you.

And while you're standing, if there are *others* from Bush, or you were one of the *subcontractors* on the job, would you stand as well? Thank you. For everything. (Seated)

AJ, on behalf of our church, I'd like to give you a small token of our thanks, and hopefully an encouragement to you and your staff. It's a crystal that reads:

*In appreciation for your commitment to excellence and superb craftsmanship.*

*Coram Deo Bible Church, South End Grand Opening, January 10, 2021. (AJ speaks)*

➤ The second person I'd like to call your attention to, is Doug Pasma of **Pasma Group Architects**. Unfortunately, Doug got sick yesterday and isn't able to be here.

But I still want you to know that I thank God for Doug. I remember telling Becky about one of my first meetings with him back in 2006; when we first *bought* the building. And she was so impressed with his eye for color, and so unimpressed with mine; that she said, "Whatever you do, just say yes to everything *Doug* says. Just say yes."

It was good advice. And I did. And we have a beautiful building to show for it. With Doug's fingerprints and creativity all over it. It's really quite a legacy.

So Doug, thank you. For everything. Thanks for your patience, your thoughtfulness, and most of all, for using your gifts to bless us.

As a token of that, we also have a crystal for you. It says:

*In appreciation for your creativity and unique design. In our entire building.  
Coram Deo Bible Church, January 10, 2021*

➤ And last, but certainly not least,\*\*\*\*\* I'd like to recognize a group on our staff who worked *closely* with Bush and Doug. To ensure that it was exactly what we wanted, and would accommodate our ministry the best it possibly could. (**Photos**)

That's Mark Zuiderveen, Eric Pearson, Grady Adkins, Jeni Wilford, and Erin Jewell. (Stand)

I know it was a great *joy* for you to work on this – meeting and making decisions – but I also know it was a lot. In addition to your regular ministry. So on behalf of *all* of us, thank you. Thank you for *your* attention to detail; and *your* commitment to excellence; and *your* creativity. We're the better for it. (Seated) (**Title Slide**)

That's the who, what, why, and how of all this. *So that* [the next generation] *should set their hope in God*, just like us. Let's pray, worship, and then get over there to see it.

Prayer – Father, this is amazing grace. What you've done. You brought us together, you blessed us to give, and you made a way. So we dedicate this new space to you. Right now. For the work of ministry and fame of your name; your glory and our joy. Use it to the utmost. And fill it to capacity. We pray, in Jesus' name, amen.